

TEACHING AGRICULTURE.

No. 2 of a Series of Articles Prepared for The Progressive Farmer and Cotton Plant by the Authors of the Text-book, "Agriculture for Beginners."

Every farmer boy is interested in animals, but he is rarely taught anything about the best way to feed these animals. He would delight to learn on so practical a subject. If our farm boys could be taught so to balance rations as to increase the yield from our cows just ten per cent, then forty million dollars would, without additional cost, be annually gained in America.

It is not worth while to multiply examples. It is clear that in making any sort of labor more intelligent you make it more economical and efficient. Hence you increase the wealth not only of the laborer, but of the country.

"Perfect agriculture," says the great Liebig, "is the true foundation of trade and industry—it is the foundation of the richest of States." Ignorance is the most costly commodity ever on the market.

In the second place, agriculture should be taught in our schools for its cultural value. It is not enough for a man to know that cowpeas increase the fertility of land. He should know how they do this just as he is taught in geography how the earth turns on its axis. He ought to know why deep plowing makes better crops just as he knows how to work a problem in arithmetic. As an intelligent being his happiness and his power will be increased by knowing how bacteria make milk sour, how germs assist in cheese-making, how ashes help plants, why drainage is good for soil, how plants feed and drink, how fertilizers are used, and countless other facts that are as easily taught as the facts of history or geography and are far more entertaining and useful.

Where Agriculture Should be Taught.

This subject has been assigned to the Fifth Grade. However, in schools that are not strictly graded, classes may be formed to include all students old enough to be interested in so vital a study.

Experience has shown wherever agriculture has been taught that it is not a dry subject. Children become more interested in it than in any other of their studies if they are encouraged to work out simple exercises and thus to use their own observational powers. Teachers will find that the subject will be a delight and recreation to their pupils. It should be borne in mind that such simple exercises as are suggested in the text and in bulletins take little or no time in preparation or in presentation, that they cost nothing, and that they will alike rest tired teacher and tired pupil, and that, best of all, they will sharpen habits of seeing things at first hand and habits of original thought.

Some Reasons Given for Not Teaching Agriculture.

Some teachers say, "I cannot teach my pupils how they should plow, hoe, ditch, sow, harrow, reap, thresh, milk, churn, make butter, feed animals, and do the countless things done on a farm."

The answer to this objection is found in the fact that the law requiring you to teach agriculture did not and does not expect you to do this. Most of these things can be learned only on the farm, and many of your pupils already are familiar with the simple mechanical operations.

The object of your teaching is to present, not the HOW, but the WHY of these things in order that knowing the WHY, the how may be

better and more intelligently done. You are not to try to show a pupil how to plow, but you can teach him from the text what is to be accomplished by plowing, and then the pupil will, knowing this, do his plowing better, for he knows thereafter the laws of tillage. You are not expected to have him wash and sun his milk pans, but if you let him understand how dirt harbors germs and how these spoil his milk, he will thereafter pay more attention to his milk cans and hence have less sour milk.

You cannot have an orchard and show him how to prune, and spray his fruit, but you can easily follow the text and teach him why these improve his fruit, and he will then find ways to do them when he has an orchard of his own. You can take the pictures in the book and teach pupils the common insect pests, and tell them how to destroy them, and the common sense of your pupils will lead them to do this. You have no dairy in which to teach butter-making, but you can easily have pupils learn that paying customers want a granular, neatly-packed package of butter, and when they open a dairy they will make this sort of butter.

In short, a teaching of the simple truths that lie at the door of successful farming is all that is expected and required of you, and these you can readily get from a study of your text.

Teachers know that it is not the body of facts required that makes the successful man or woman. It is the facility given by study, the power of thought, the turning of fresh minds to primary truths, the bent in the right direction, that gives the pupil a grasp that leads to able doing.

(Article III Next Week.)

Alliencemen Asked to Aid Southern Cotton Association.

N. C. State Farmers' Alliance, President's Office, Macpelah, N. C., September 22, 1905.

To the Secretaries of Sub-Alliances: The Executive Committee of the Cotton Growers' Association has "called" for a contribution of three cents per bale for "campaign" purposes. Please urge the members of your Alliance to pay the same promptly and forward it to the treasurer of the Association.

Persons not members of the Alliance but interested in cotton growing should be also asked to contribute. You can forward their money for them if requested to do so. Prompt action is earnestly requested.

Fraternally,

W. A. GRAHAM, President.

Lecturer Cates in Cabarrus County.

Messrs. Editors: On account of the extreme illness of my father (and he is still no better), I have not been able to give your readers a report of my trip to Cabarrus as I promised, but I know they will excuse me for so great a reason as this.

But suffice it to say, we had a great time up there in old Cabarrus County. This is a good county, equal to the best; chockfull of good people. We were invited up there August 23 to the farmers' annual picnic, and no one who loves a good time and had ever been there could refuse such an invitation—and I had been there once.

So when the train rolled into Concord that morning I was on board, and the first one we saw was

Miss Jessie Sims, the beautiful and accomplished daughter of the Hon. J. A. Sims, who came in her buggy to meet me. Miss Jessie proved a good guide and we were soon on the picnic grounds (a nice shady grove on the much noted Spring Hill Dairy Farm, owned by said Mr. Sims) in the midst of at least ten thousand people. Music was furnished by one of the best bands in the State.

About 11 o'clock Dr. B. F. Dixon was introduced to this great crowd, and he made a fine speech on Education. Then dinner and a general mixing up and friend meeting friend, etc., until about 2 o'clock the crowd was called together again and Col. Cunningham was introduced, and he, in his usual forceful manner, occupied this hour. Then the State Lecturer Cates was brought forward, and if the rain had not come on so soon we might have had some fun; but after all this was a great day for Cabarrus County people. Farmers, town folks, and every one enjoyed the day immensely.

After this we spent two weeks in Cabarrus in the interest of the Farmers' Alliance, and the result was eight Sub-Alliances and the county alive to the notion that the farmers ought to organize and stand together, for all that goes to make men better and broader.

I am expecting Bro. T. B. Parker to go to Concord some time in October and organize the County Alliance, of which good notice will be given.

I want to lift my hat and make my best bow to the people of Cabarrus County for the many kindnesses shown me while there, and especially do I thank the ladies of the many good homes I visited for their kindness. And I shall never forget the editors of the Tribune and Times for the many courtesies and kind words and helping hands. You did your part well, gentlemen, and I hope fame and fortune may ever stay with you, and that you may enjoy the fruit of your labor. May we all live to meet again.

H. M. CATES.

Alamance Co., N. C.

Money in Grain Crops.

(Advertisement.)

The fact that the North Carolina farmers are in better financial condition this year than heretofore is most encouraging. No where are the wheels of industry more diligently engaged than on the farm. Every hour is full of pleasant labor. The bug-a-bear "farm drudgery" is relegated to the dim past, and the farmers to-day are as wide-awake and live to every interest as the most astute banker or captain of industry. It is a grand thought and worthy of serious contemplation that the prosperity of the farmers means the prosperity of the entire country. Indicative of this fact, take the conditions which existed a few years ago, when the price of tobacco fell below the cost of production, and last year the price of cotton did likewise. There was a gloom over the entire State. The bankers said, "Money was 'mighty tight,'" the merchant said, "Times were powerful hard," the manufacturers had less demand for their product, and all along the line business was depressed.

To-day tobacco and cotton are bringing good prices. Poultry and eggs are remunerative. All the farm products bring in good revenue. The bankers, merchants, and manufacturers have a broad smile on their faces. Why? Because "times are good." The farmers have reaped abundant harvests and are willing and ready to invest in additional supplies as well as luxuries for the home. New and modern machinery is being purchased. Additions are made to

the homes. New furniture is installed. New dresses and hats for the wives and daughters.

While all of these things are taking place, we must not lose sight of the fact that there is another crop to prepare for, and if we have not yet prepared our lands for wheat or oats, we must attend to it at once. The question of fertilizers is also to be considered. First, it will be desirable to haul out and scatter all the stable manure we have saved, and supplement this with some good commercial fertilizer. If we have saved enough manure, we should purchase a high grade bone and potash goods, say, a 10-4 or 12-3, or even a higher grade for some lands. If we have no manure it would pay better to buy some standard grade of ammoniated goods like an 8-2-2.

Friends, we must make a good wheat crop this time. The price is good, and likely to remain good, and there is just one more bit of advice I want to give you. It is this: Buy the fertilizers made by the Virginia-Carolina Chemical Company. They have spent more time, thought and money in making their fertilizers than any other company. They have stood by the farmers and helped us get good prices for our crops. They have been in the fertilizer business long enough to know what are the best ingredients to use in their goods, and they unquestionably make the best goods sold on the market to-day. They have agents in every town in the State; if you don't happen to know who handle their goods nearest you, write to Mr. L. A. Carr, Durham, N. C., and he will give you the name of the nearest agent.

Use Va-Carolina Chemical Company Fertilizers under your Wheat and Oats and other fall crops.



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Two cents a word for first insertion, and one cent a word for each additional insertion, each figure or initial counting as a separate word. Send cash with order.

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WANTED—A foreman for farm for 1906; must be sober, reliable, and not afraid of hard work. Give references, J. B. G., care Progressive Farmer.

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